Stefan Mangnus’s *The Divinity of the Word: Thomas Aquinas on Dividing and Reading the Gospel of John* results from a “double sense of wonder,” one methodological and the other substantive. His methodological wonder concerns the scholastic technique of beginning commentaries with a *divisio textus*, a structuring principle that allowed the commentator to offer a coherent and orderly exposition of a given text. His substantive wonder concerns Thomas’s claim that John’s gospel—unlike those of Matthew, Mark, and Luke—primarily intends to reveal Christ’s divinity, not his humanity. These two wonders go hand-in-hand: Thomas’s Johannine *divisio textus* emphasizes divinity and, given the structuring nature of a *divisio*, his commentary shares this emphasis (evidenced, for instance, in Thomas’ frequent consideration of Christological and Trinitarian issues throughout this text).

The first chapter presents the *divisio textus* formulated in the opening of Thomas’s commentary. It is the general thesis of Mangnus’s study that grasping the *divisio textus* is indispensable for understanding medieval commentaries such as Thomas’ scriptural commentaries. This work. Mangnus explains that *divisio textus* is the practice of dividing the source text and that this is a hallmark of scholastic method. Importantly, he maintains, the way one chose to divide a given text greatly influenced the interpretative character of the subsequent commentary. To illustrate this point,
Mangnus considers how the divisiones and commentaries of Albert the Great, Bonaventure, and Thomas Aquinas differ from one another. As he explains, Albert’s divisio suggests a reading that is oriented towards the passion narrative, in which the notion of sanctification, so central to Albert’s structure, comes to fruition. For Bonaventure, the incarnation is the lens through which he reads the Fourth Gospel. Thomas finally, in line with his remarks about the origin of the Gospel as written in response to people who denied the divinity of Christ, takes the divinity to be the object of John’s Gospel. (196)

Thomas’s emphasis on the Divinity of Christ led him to treat and disprove a number of Christological heresies. Thomas did so, Mangnus convincingly explains, by presenting a holistic reading of John’s gospel, one grounded not only in other scriptural passages but also various patristic sources. Though modern commentators often view John 1:1-18 as the prologue to the rest of the gospel, Mangnus argues that Thomas treats the entirety of John 1 in order to indicate the focus of the rest of the gospel: namely, the Divinity of Christ. With the key of the divisio textus, then, Mangnus unlocks Thomas’ commentary: ‘The divisio textus is...the structuring guide to Thomas’s reading of the Fourth Gospel. It shows how for Thomas the abundance of small expositions, quotations from patristic sources and discussions of details of the text of the Gospel that together are his commentary, form a unity that speaks of the divinity of Christ.’ (200)

Here one sees Mangnus’ two senses of wonder: the Thomistic divisio emphasizes John’s focus on the divinity of Christ and, consequently, guides Thomas’ commentary.

Chapter two turns to consider the meaning of “Word” (verbum) within this gospel. Verbum is, of course, of central importance to this text, as the opening of John’s gospel makes abundantly clear. Mangnus’s exposition of this term is expansive and intricate and, while challenging at times to comprehend fully, richly rewards its readers. Indeed, as Mangnus shows through his treatment of verbum, Thomas presents in his commentary a “profound theology of the Word that is unique within Thomas’s writings.” (103)

Chapter three addresses the incarnation of Christ. An innovative feature of Thomas’s commentary concerning this issue is the discussion and refutation of Christological heresies. Mangnus carefully guides his reader through Thomas’ treatment and shows how Thomas incorporates this element of dogmatic theology seamlessly into the genre of biblical commentary.

Chapter four addresses the ways in which Christ’s divinity was made known in the gospel text. Mangnus, faithfully following Thomas, focuses on two ways: seeing and hearing. These are two natural avenues for human cognition and, because Thomas maintains that knowledge is received by a knower according to the mode of the knower, were implemented by the Gospel author to communicate the truths of revelation. Importantly, Mangnus notes, this section of Thomas’ commentary reminds the reader that investigation of the Divinity of Christ is not merely of intellectual
interest. Instead, it seeks to respond to “a longing to understand the salvific history of Christ” and, in this way, Christology leads to soteriology. (167)

Chapter five, the final chapter, directly considers the Divinity of Christ— something emphasized within Thomas’ initial divisio textus and elaborated on throughout the rest of his commentary. In this chapter, Mangnus pays particular consideration to The Trinitarian theology and the “Johannine concept of glorification,” both of direct relevance to understanding the Divinity of Christ. (171)

Mangnus’s study admirably demonstrates not only the richness contained within the source text of the Gospel but also the value of scholastic methodology. While there were clear distinctions between different tasks of a theological magister, he notes that their commentaries intend “to teach their readers the entire width of Christian theology and the Christian life.” (1) The modern separation of scripture, dogmatics, and morals (to name but a few examples) is foreign to the traditional scholastic methodology. An advantage of returning to the medieval commentary tradition, then, is that it allows reunification of discrete areas of theology. He thus shows a significant difference between scholastic and contemporary methodology and advocates for scholasticism’s inclusive approach.

In sum, Mangnus offers an intricate account of the meaning of the divisio textus within the medieval commentary tradition and its particular importance in Thomas Aquinas’s scriptural commentaries. Mangnus asks in the conclusion of this study, What can the divisiones textus that theologians like Thomas Aquinas, Albert, and Bonaventure make of the fourth Gospel contribute to our understanding of the Gospel, to the way we think about its structure, and the hermeneutical importance we do or do not attribute to this structure? (201)

Mangnus lays an indispensable foundation for answering this question by presenting the meaning and function of the divisio textus in medieval theology and then treating the implementation of this tool within Thomas Aquinas’s Johannine commentary. The Divinity of the Word is complex and intricate, which is hardly surprising given the richness of its source material. But, while Mangnus’s study demands careful and precise attention, it is richly rewarding.

[Ryan J. Brady, Conforming to Right reason: On the Ends of the Moral Virtues and the Roles of Prudence and Synderesis (Steubenville: Emmaus Academic, 2022)]

The present study is an excellent example of how much can be at stake in debates on medieval theology. Does Thomas Aquinas contradict himself when he writes in the prima secundae that prudence appoints the ends of the virtues, and in the secunda secundae that synderesis does this? An interesting discussion indeed, but is it really that consequential? As Steven Long explains in his foreword, it is. He relates it to the ongoing confusion about the nature of practical reason and the moral life. He
considers this study a “true vaccine against the theoretic disorders of voluntarism and nominalism in the moral life” (xxii). The language is perhaps a bit charged, but this apparently small debate is merely the prelude of much bigger questions. And in Brady’s own introduction, this becomes perfectly clear. He explains that to pursue eternal happiness, a person needs rectified appetites and that it is reason that orders them. His criticism of other theologians, mainly James Keenan, is that one, it inordinately overemphasizes volition and, two, it departs from the standard evaluation of the Thomistic commentatorial tradition (cf. 6). In short: if motivation is what matters most in evaluating moral action, it does not really matter what you do. This is why reason needs to take precedence over the will in appointing the ends to the moral virtues. Yet the question remains how that relates to prudence.

Brady engages this in three chapters: the first on the importance of the end, the second on the causality of the intellect, and the third on the main question of what appoints the end. In chapter 1, Brady takes the reader through an impressive number of sources, including the Sentences commentary, the commentary on the Psalms, with the odd reference to Shakespeare. I note this because it shows that the author has taken great care to avoid proof-texting but rather gives a comprehensive overview of Aquinas’s discussion of the end. The arguments may sound familiar, but they are backed up convincingly: rational creatures are to conform to the good in order to pursue their happiness, nature is attuned to that end but still in need of further guidance to attain it, and the potency for the life of grace can only be actualized by a divine agent. This forms the backdrop for chapter two, on the causality of the intellect. It sets out by exploring the historical considerations on the relation between cognition of volition. Keenan and others follow Lottin in claiming there is a shift in Aquinas’s teaching on this matter. Brady argues that the “terminology did shift in view of circumstances and audience, but his teaching is remarkably consistent” (102). The historical study is broad and detailed, including Tempier’s condemnation of Averroist theses and the dating of the De Malo. It may seem that Aquinas begins to teach around that time that the will is autonomous from the intellect (cf. 141). The will certainly enjoys freedom, but “the intellect is the radix libertatis” (181). The question that then remains for the third and final chapter is how synderesis, prudence, and conscience - all pertaining to the intellect- are to be explained in terms of appointing the ends of the moral virtues. Here, the book comes full circle, beginning with a discussion of Cajetan’s resolution to Aquinas’s apparent change of mind. Brady takes a deep dive into questions of synderesis and conscience, which leads him to his proposed solution on the question of what appoints the end to the moral virtues: “synderesis and faith, corresponding respectively to the natural and supernatural end, undeniably appoint the end”; when we say prudence appoints ends, “the ends it appoints presuppose the apprehension of other ends that are apprehended either by faith or natural reason” (226). In the sense that prudence enables the pursuit of these ends in the most ideal way, it can be said to appoint the end. Brady’s proposal is to distinguish these different kinds of appointing. He suggests we follow Cessario “by rendering praestituere as ‘to
appoint beforehand’ in regard to synderesis and as ‘to enact’ in regard to prudence. In other words, prudence enacts principles already apprehended by the habit of synderesis” (231-232).

It’s hard to do justice to such a meticulously researched and carefully argued book in a brief review. Although it argues that Aquinas did not change his mind, it is not another one of those Aquinas-could-not-possibly-have-changed-his-mind books that are mainly concerned with salvaging a certain school of thought. It is well-written, respectful to the scholars it engages, and accessible to readers familiar with the works of Aquinas. In fact, to them it will be delightful example of meticulous Thomistic analysis. By referring to Pinckaers’s discussion of freedom, Brady places this debate in a broader contexts and helps the reader understand what is at stake. A lot of attention has been given to prudence lately, and Brady’s volume will help all scholars interested in the ‘charioteer of the virtues’, to understand it as part of the larger framework of Aquinas’s thought on moral deliberation and happiness.

[Anton ten Klooster, Tilburg University]

J.F. Boyle, *The Order and Division of Divine Truth: St. Thomas Aquinas as Scholastic Master of the Sacred Page* (Steubenville: Emmaus Academic, 2021)

This collection brings together fourteen articles on Thomas Aquinas that John F. Boyle published over twenty-five years. Most of these articles were published before; one was newly written for this book.

The collection opens with an article that is a general introduction to Thomas Aquinas and Sacred Scripture. That is fitting as Boyle has done much work on Thomas’s biblical commentaries. Boyle discusses the senses of Scripture and the divisio textus, the method of dividing and structuring the text under commentary. The eye for structure, which is characteristic of Thomas, is a point to which Boyle returns several times in these articles: Boyle was one of the first to study the divisio textus of Thomas’s Biblical commentaries and argue for its relevance for the interpretation of these commentaries: it shows the way individual passages in a biblical book are to be read in context and shows the conceptual unity, of both the biblical book and the commentary.

Boyle’s sharp eye for structure is not restricted to the Biblical Commentaries, as two older articles in the collection show. In these, Boyle gives his take on two classical structural questions in the *Summa Theologiae*: the division in the tertia pars between questions on the mystery of the incarnation and the mysteries of Christ’s life and passion (Boyle argues against the view that the first part is essentially scientific and the second essentially scriptural), and the place of the Christology in the whole of the *Summa* (Boyle argues that since who Christ is and what Christ does is dependant upon what man is and his historical condition, it makes sense to place Christology after the anthropology).
In one of the more recent articles in the collection, Boyle presents an interesting view on the commentary on Job. According to Boyle, next to the principal theme of providence, there is a secondary aspect of the commentary: Thomas reads the commentary on Job as a disputation on growing in truth and wisdom. The participants' capacity in this disputation depends on the moral and intellectual character of the disputants themselves. In the course of the disputation, the characters of those in dialogue emerge. The book of Job, read this way, becomes a study of growth in truth and the things that prohibit that growth.

The commentary on Job is the only of Thomas's Biblical commentaries that lacks a detailed divisio textus. In several articles in this volume, Boyle argues that the order of the disputation itself structures the book of Job and that a divisio textus would not be particularly helpful. This argument does not convince me: there are disputation in the Gospel of John, and in his commentary on those passages Thomas does not minimise the divisio textus. Furthermore, a divisio textus could help understand how the overarching topic of providence is developed in the book of Job and show how smaller passages in this book are related. My suggestion would be that the reason for the absence of a detailed divisio textus is to be found in the audience Thomas wrote this commentary for. The divisio textus is an academic instrument, and this is the only Biblical commentary Thomas did not write for students at university or the studium generale in Naples but for his brothers in the convent of Orvieto. Humbert of Romans, master of the Dominican order at the time Thomas wrote the commentary on Job, had instructed conventual lectors to refrain from too many divisions and subdivisions, and it seems reasonable to think that Thomas followed his advice in this commentary.

In several of his articles, Boyle discusses the relationship of Scripture Commentary to the Summa. He describes it with the analogy that the Summa is like lab work, in which the careful dissection of things is central, while the commentaries are like field work: they focus on the observation of the objects of theological inquiry living and in relation one to another.

The final five articles show Boyle's attention to analogy. In his analyses of Thomas' use of the word per in creation and procession, the analogy of Potentia Generandi, the analogy of healing in the sacraments of penance and the anointing of the sick, the consequences of the absence of a strict natural analogue for the procession of the Holy Spirit, and the analogy of 'homo' and 'Deus' in the Lectura Romana, Boyle is a precise reader and clear commentator of Thomas's thinking. The Lectura Romana of the Sentences form another thread throughout these articles: Boyle was co-author of the first critical edition of this work, and so it is not surprising to see him helpfully refer to this work more often than usual.

The articles in this collection show a great diversity: some are more general, like the introduction to the English translation of the commentary on Romans, some are more analytical. One might have wished the author to include more scholarship from outside the English-speaking world: in a book that pays so much attention to structure
and *divisio textus*, it is surprising to find no mention of the seminal contributions of scholars like M.M Rossi and G. Dahan. This does not take away from Boyle’s insights in the study of Aquinas, as this book shows: it is a gift to have these articles now brought together in one book.

[Stefan Mangnus, O.P., Tilburg University]

J. Kirwan (ed.) and J. Minerd (tr.), *The Thomistic Response to the Nouvelle Théologie: Concerning the Truth of Dogma and the Nature of Theology* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2023)

Was Thomistic philosophy and theology equipped to meet the questions and concerns of the modern world? Or was a new way of doing theology—by returning to the sources of Christian thought in the Scriptures and in the Church Fathers—advantageous and even necessary for such a reproachment?

Critical studies of historical primary texts and their interpretation was an important point of discussion regarding the 20th century “nouvelle théologie” controversies and the Catholic “ressourcement” movement generally. It is with a delightful irony, therefore, that the French Dominican literature detailing their Thomistic criticisms of *ressourcement* ideas are now made available in English translation; thus will commence a Thomistic *return-to-the-sources*. In order to understand the *nouvelle* debates, attention will need to be given to the historical sources and their contemporary context.

This new CUA Press volume from Matthew Minerd and Jon Kirwan is a handy singular introduction to the central points of friction concerning the *nouvelle théologie* controversies of the 1940’s, from the perspective of the Thomistic response.

Four figures; two schools; one order: Michel-Marie Labourdette, O.P., Marie-Joseph Nicolas, O.P., and Raymond-Léopold Bruckberger, O.P., all of the Toulouse school publishing in *Revue thomiste*; and Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., of *Angelicum* at Rome. Their interlocutors: *ressourcement* theologians from among the Fourvière Jesuits, such as Jean Daniélou, Henri de Lubac, Henri Bouillard, and Jean-Marie Le Blond, as well as Bruno de Solages. “Nearly ten Dominican and Jesuit thinkers exchanged over twenty articles and other writings across five different journals over a period of almost four years” (2). Sixteen articles from the Toulouse and Roman Dominicans were translated for this volume. Labourdette dominates the first half of the book; Garrigou-Lagrange, the second half.

Whereas Garrigou-Lagrange can be commended for his refreshingly direct, terse, and even courageous engagements with central issues such as the nature of truth, the first principles of the speculative intellect, and the stability of dogmatic definitions and concepts, his articles often lack explanatory depth and also end up sounding rather repetitive. Labourdette, on the other hand, is masterful in his theological evaluations of the speculative nature of theology as a *scientia* and the
perennial role of Aquinas, as well as with his personal tact toward his Jesuit interlocutors.

The editors are correct in their estimation that this debate is “a dialogue delayed” (1) and that an amicable conclusion of the debate “could have dramatically lowered the theological temperature of the pre-conciliar era” (2) and even better situated the post-conciliar Church in a position of unity.

Thus, one disappointment with the text is the unfortunate occurrence that Patricia Kelly’s 2020 publication, Ressourcement Theology: A Source Book, prevented this Kirwan-Minerd volume from incorporating both sides of the debate. What would have been a one-stop shop for all the major interlocutions between the Jesuits and the Dominicans instead only contains the Dominican side of the debate. As it is, the volume is monumentally important, even if it feels incomplete, like one is listening only to one side of a telephone conversation.

The other disappointment is with the text itself: throughout the volume, no small number of typographical errors can be spotted, sometimes clearly affecting the meaning in context. At times, the flow and articulation also reveal that it could have benefitted from another editorial hand. One hopes that future printings can find rectification.

These disappointments notwithstanding, the volume is a remarkable feat and a great service to academic Catholic theology. It is thorough, well-researched, and includes helpful features such as a timeline of the relevant discourses and a commanding 85-page Introduction. The Introduction alone is worth reading in itself, not least of which because of its extensive quotations from primary sources from both sides of the debate. They are also careful to outline each primary text to follow, both in its own structure and theses, but also in its dialectical context by examining the texts not present in this volume, those of the ressourcement sources.

Kirwan and Minerd have provided an enormous service to the community of Catholic theological scholarship by making so readily available these writings from Thomistic scholars of the first half of the 20th century. As the debate concerned the nature of dogma, analogy, Thomism, dialogue, theology, sacra doctrina, and even truth itself, this reviewer is most grateful for the opportunity that this volume provides the theologian to reflect upon his own vocation and discipline.

[Brandon Wanless, St. Paul Seminary/University of St. Thomas]
the being and incarnation of the Word, the redemptive passion and death of Christ, participation in Christ’s life, participation in the Triune life through Christ, and Christian discipleship and the mystical body of Christ. One has to congratulate the editor, Jason Paone, with this wonderful design, but also with the choice of texts that are presented. Aquinas’ commentary on John is best represented with 22 texts, out of a total of 51 exegetical texts. All texts are taken from Aquinas’s commentaries on books of the New Testament. One would have expected commentaries on Old Testament texts, such as Psalms, that according to Aquinas ‘almost seems like the gospel’ (introduction), to be included as well, but perhaps a second anthology will be devoted to this? With a few exceptions, all translations are taken from the ones presented in the bi-lingual edition of the Aquinas Institute (Rochester), but, fortunately, corrected by the editor. Next to translations of biblical commentary, the book contains several prayers, most of which belong to the liturgy of Corpus Christi, attributed to Aquinas. The first one entitled ‘Before Study’, however, is spurious. The inaugural sermons which follow are helpful, but it is curious to see that the probable historical sequence is turned around. A list of references to the Latin editions of the works translated would have been helpful, as well as an overview of commentaries presented, but the book does provide helpful bibliographies and indexes. Moreover, explicit footnote references are given for sources that Aquinas employs. A quite pertinent and well-grounded introduction features the recent development of interest in Aquinas’s interpretation of Scripture, sometimes called ‘Biblical Thomism’, which duly corrects the one-sided portrayal of Aquinas as philosopher or systematician and emphasizes Aquinas as the actual teacher – magister in sacra pagina - he was.

[Henk J.M. Schoot, Tilburg University]